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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 002341

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/18/2028  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [UN](#) [MX](#)  
SUBJECT: MEXICAN MILITARY AGREES TO UN HUMAN RIGHTS  
ASSISTANCE

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Charles Barclay.  
Reason: 1.4 (b), (d).

¶1. (SBU) Summary. In July, the Mexico office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) signed an agreement with the Mexican Government giving it a mandate to provide SEDENA with human rights assistance. Alberto Brunori, the OHCHR's Mexico Director, recently described to Embassy officers the terms of the agreement granting his office the authority to review the Mexican military's (SEDENA) training programs in human rights, international humanitarian law, and gender equality. He believes this is a significant achievement and anticipates relying on \$1 million in Merida Initiative funding to support his new mandate. The agreement offers the international community an unprecedented opportunity to address constructively human rights concerns.  
End summary.

#### OHCHR's Human Rights Mandate

¶2. (SBU) Acting PolCouns and AID Democracy and Governance Officer met with Brunori July 15 to discuss the agreement with SEDENA. Brunori said that in January 2009, SEDENA conveyed interest in receiving human rights assistance from OHCHR and offered a draft proposal aimed at having his office provide the military human rights training. Brunori told EmbOffs he felt that other organizations could do a better job in providing training and believed his organization could make a more meaningful contribution to the promotion of human rights in other ways. After six months of negotiations, Brunori successfully reached an agreement with SEDENA that gives his office a mandate to:

- review SEDENA's human rights training programs;
- develop a set of indices to measure SEDENA's human rights performance; and
- track SEDENA's compliance with international recommendations on public security and human rights.

While SEDENA negotiated the substance of the agreement, Mexico's Foreign Ministry (SRE) cleared on the final text and Mexico's Minister of the Interior (SEGOB), Fernandez Gomez Mont, signed the agreement which took the form of an exchange of letters.

#### Implications

¶3. (C) To post's knowledge, this is the first time that Mexico's military has agreed to receive such broad human

rights assistance from an international organization. Under the agreement, OHCHR will be able to offer its views on SEDENA's current human rights programs and establish a bar for progress in key areas. Brunori and his staff are already traveling to areas in Mexico where military counter narcotics operations are underway to assess local security situations and determine how best the office can shape SEDENA programs.

#### Funding En Route

¶4. (C) Brunori expressed apprehension about funding his new mandate. However, the U.S. Congress earmarked \$1 million for OHCHR's office in Mexico and Brunori plans to draw down those funds to stand up a monitoring unit. In addition, on August 3, USAID signed an agreement with OHCHR's offices in New York to make funding available for the office in Mexico.

¶5. (C) Comment. The agreement between OHCHR and the GOM marks a significant step forward and signals SEDENA's growing willingness to engage outsiders on human rights. Taken with its recent acknowledgment that soldiers have been involved in rights violations for which they have been investigated, prosecuted and punished, it demonstrates that the institution wants to address human rights concerns more constructively. OHCHR has been a staunch critic of the Mexican military's current domestic law enforcement role. Brunori's efforts to carry out the third element of his new mandate - tracking compliance with international recommendations - may prove sensitive. However, he is clearly a skilled diplomat committed to carrying out his office's new mandate. He

intends to engage with SEDENA in a meaningful way, not simply allow the institution to use the agreement as window dressing. End Comment.

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